

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly Newscast

November 8th, 2013

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as an ESL classroom resource

Alberta ■ Government



www.alberta.ca

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the definition that best matches each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word	Definition
	1. controversial	a) elected leader of a city, or municipal government
	2. mayor	b) to have an elected position
	3. in office	c) likely to cause public disagreement
	4. to be drunk	d) to be unable to act or function normally due to drinking a large quantity of alcohol
	5. denied	e) having or showing strong feelings
	6. emotional	f) saying sorry for actions or words said
	7. apology	g) said something is not true

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

crack cocaine – a kind of cocaine, an illegal substance (drug) that can be smoked and is thought to be very addictive

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ The mayor of Toronto said he used illegal drugs.
2. _____ Ford said he had never used drugs while he was drinking.
3. _____ In the past, Ford has denied smoking crack.
4. _____ Some people say there is a video of Ford smoking crack.
5. _____ The mayor will not apologize for his mistakes.

Discussion Questions

If an elected person has used illegal drugs, should they resign? Is a politician's personal life important if they do a good job?

News story #2

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Choose the synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
	1) lengthy	a. argument discussion
	2) debate	b. long lasting very long
	3) suspended	c. person injured person suffering
	4) victim	d. security (for ex: sickness, injury, death) assurance
	5) title	e. stopped for a time punishment of involuntary leave
	6) insurance	f. name of position at work name of job

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

witch-hunt – unfairly attacking a person whose opinions you do not agree with

fraudulent – something illegal or dishonest

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Read and answer the questions below. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. How many senators have recently been suspended by the Senate?
2. Do these senators believe they have been treated fairly? Why or why not?
3. What benefits can the senators keep?
4. Will there be any further investigation of the senators?

Discussion Questions

Do you think that anyone who takes money from their employer should be fired, or should they be given a second chance? Why or why not?

News story #3

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily.

Vocabulary

Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

skeleton (the bones that support a body)	major (very important)
fossil (parts of animals and plants that are saved in rocks)	uncovered (discovered or found)
trench (a long, narrow pit)	remains (parts of a body left after a person or animal dies)

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

Paleontologist: a person who studies ancient life, including dinosaurs

1. When we cleaned out the garage, we _____ some old family photos in a box.
2. We dug a _____ in our vegetable garden in which to grow potatoes.
3. There was a _____ in the rock we found when we were camping.
4. When the snow melted in spring we found the _____ of a mouse in our recycling bin
5. If you find animal remains in your garden, you can usually tell what kind of animal it was by looking at the shape of the _____.
6. Because my wife now has to use a wheelchair, we have had to make _____ changes to our everyday lives.

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening activity: Multiple Choice

Choose the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. A dinosaur fossil was found in _____ and a) Leduc/ second this is the _____ dinosaur found recently in b) Edmonton/ third Alberta.	
2. The bones are thought to be a _____ which a) hadrosaur / 68 lived _____ million years ago. b) tyrannosaurus rex/ 568	
3. The bones were found in a _____ a) hole/ utilities . by _____ workers. b) trench/ construction.	
4. Hadrosaur bones have been found in a) Calgary/Edmonton _____ and _____ in recent b) Leduc/ Spirit River. times.	

Discussion Questions: Are you interested in learning about dinosaurs? Can we learn anything about our own lives from studying the ancient past?

Language Focus – The Simple Past

When we are talking about things that started and ended in the past, we use the simple past.

1. To make the regular form of the simple past, add **–ed** to the base form of the verb.

walk + **ed** = walked

stay + **ed** = stayed

2. The simple past form of the verb *to be* is **was/ were**.
3. There are a number of other irregular forms of the simple past, and there are lots in this week's audio.

take = took

teach = taught

Listen again to Story #1. While you are listening, write down all the past tense verbs you hear; both the regular and irregular.

How many did you write down? How many of the simple past forms were regular and how many were irregular? How important do you think it is to memorize the irregular forms?

Check the appendix for the answers.

You can also listen to audio two and three for more examples of the regular and irregular simple past.

Note: Do not include the past participle form that makes up different tenses – the present/past perfect

For example: has admitted, have been (present perfect), had denied, had said (past perfect)

Transcripts of Weekly News Stories

	NOVEMBER 7 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for November 7 th .	0:00
Story 1	The controversial mayor of Toronto said he will stay in office Tuesday even though he has now admitted that he smoked crack cocaine while he was drunk. For many months Ford had denied using drugs. There have been many questions since back in May when journalists reported there was a video that they said showed the mayor smoking crack. When asked in the past if he had smoked crack, Ford had always said no and even said there was no video. Hours after his surprise statement, Ford made an emotional apology for his "mistakes" but said he had no plans to step aside.	0:10
Story 2	After lengthy debate, Mike Duffy, Pamela Wallin and Patrick Brazeau have been suspended from the Senate. All three still say they're the victims of a political witch hunt. Duffy, Wallin and Brazeau keep the title of senator and their insurance coverage, but get no pay for the rest of the current parliamentary session. They are under investigation by the R.C.M.P. for fraudulent expense claims	1:07
Story 3	A dinosaur skeleton found in Leduc is the second major fossil find in Alberta in a month. Construction workers at a housing development uncovered what paleontologists think are the bones of a hadrosaur -- a duck-billed dinosaur that lived about 68 million years ago. The construction company called the Royal Tyrell Museum on October 23 rd , after workers digging a trench found the fossil. The bones were removed yesterday and taken to the museum in Drumheller. Hadrosaur remains were also found on October first -- at Spirit River -- near Grande Prairie.	1:48

Answer keys:

News story 1 - Vocabulary

Answer	Word	Definition
c	1. controversial	a) elected leader of a city, or municipal government
a	2. mayor	b) to have an elected position
b	3. in office	c) likely to cause public disagreement
d	4. to be drunk	d) to be unable to act or function normally due to drinking a large quantity of alcohol
g	5. denied	e) having or showing strong feelings
e	6. emotional	f) saying sorry for actions or words said
f	7. apology	g) said something is not true

Listening

1. TThe mayor of Toronto said he used illegal drugs.
2. FFord said he had never used drugs while he was drinking.
3. TIn the past, Ford has denied smoking crack.
4. TSome people say there is a video of Ford smoking crack.
5. FThe mayor will not apologize for his mistakes.

News story 2

Vocabulary

Answer	Word from the story	Related words
b	1) lengthy	a. argument discussion
a	2) debate	b. long lasting very long
e	3) suspended	c. person injured person suffering
c	4) victim	d. security (for ex: sickness, injury, death) assurance
f	5) title	e. stopped for a time punishment of involuntary leave
d	6) insurance	f. name of position at work name of job

Listening

1. How many senators have recently been suspended by the Senate?
Three senators have been suspended.
2. Do these senators believe they have been treated fairly? Why or why not?
They do not believe they have been treated fairly. They say they have been victims of a witch-hunt.
3. What benefits can the senators keep?
They can keep their title and insurance coverage.
4. Will there be any further investigation of the senators?
Yes, the RCMP are investigating the senators.

Story 3

Vocabulary

1. When we cleaned out the garage, we uncovered some old family photos in a box.
2. We dug a trench in our vegetable garden in which to grow potatoes.
3. There was a fossil in the rock we found when we were camping.
4. When the snow melted in spring we found the remains of a mouse in our recycling bin
5. If you find animal remains in your garden, you can usually tell what kind of animal it was by looking at the shape of the skeleton.
6. Because my wife now has to use a wheelchair, we have had to make major changes to our everyday lives.

Listening

1. A dinosaur fossil was found in Leduc and this is the second dinosaur found recently in Alberta.	a) Leduc/ second b) Edmonton/ third
2. The bones are thought to be a hadrosaur which lived 68 million years ago.	a) hadrosaur / 68 b) tyrannosaurus rex/ 568
3. The bones were found in a trench by construction workers.	a) hole/ utilities . b) trench/ construction.
4. Hadrosaur bones have been found in Leduc and Spirit River in recent times.	a) Calgary/Edmonton b) Leduc/ Spirit River.

Language Focus

Regular: smoked reported showed asked

Irregular: said made had was